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NO. 9.

THE BLACKWELL EX ISLES.

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## The Blackwell Ex-Isles.

COMIC SKETCH.

BY SAUL SERTREW.

### CHARACTERS.

SANDY.

CORNELIUS.

SCENE—*Street. View of a pawnbroker's house. Three balls hanging over the door, and sign marked "Simpson."*  
*Enter SANDY, clothed in rags.*

(Looks up at house.)—Here have I anchored at last. To Simpson's have I come. An exile from Blackwell's Isle. Yes, they drove me from its palatial mansions. There's not even standing room. The people are hanging to the water-spout, and I have come here to Simpson's to see if I can *spout* myself. (Looks at his clothes.) I can't raise anything on these garments—(surprised)—garments, did I say! Garbage, I should have said. (Looks at house.) Oh! if Simpson would loan me something on myself! I will, I will appeal to him, and if he does not hear my appeal, I will carry my case to the Court of Appeals. (Goes to door of pawnbroker's house and sings):

“TAKE ME, SIMPSON.”

AIR: “Take this Letter to My Mother.”

Take me Simpson, take me darling,  
 Loan me something on myself ;  
 Fold me in my linen duster,  
 Throw me up upon the shelf.  
 For the times they are so poorly,  
 Nothing can I get to do ;  
 I've been chewing my suspenders  
 Till my teeth are black and blue.

CHORUS.

Take me, Simpson, take me, darling,  
 Loan me something on myself ;

Fold me in my linen duster,  
Hang me up upon the shelf.

[Comes forward.

Where, oh, where's my rich relations,  
Where's the friends I used to know ;  
Where's the Judge that gave me six months,  
Whyfore don't he do so now ?  
Once I was a Gladiator,  
In the Ring I had a "pull ;"  
Now they hang me out the window  
When the station-house is full.  
Take me, Simpson, &c.

*One of the balls drops from over the door. SANDY discovers the ball.*

Ah ! what is this I see before me—a snowball ? (Picks up ball.) No ! it's one of Simpson's ten-pin balls that has fallen from over his alley door. Yes, this ball has heard me bawling, and "dropt on it." (Examines ball and soliloquizes.) Ah, this ball. I knew it well, Horatio Simpson. O, how many times I have played ten-pins and made a ten strike with that ball ! Ah, those good times are past. You might put this ball in a cannon now and shoot it off, and you wouldn't hit anything. (Smooths ball with his hand.) To what base use some things do come ! This ball, now so *baldheaded*, must have met with many *hairbreadth* escapes. Perchance this ball may have dangled from the ear of some belle of the ball, and now has become the emblem of a pawn-broker, and playing three-card monte over his door while he is throwing *dice* inside, I will take this ball into Simpson's, and tell him it's a *paradice* lost and I have found it. Tho' I may be *batted* and *bounced* out, upon this ball I will *pitch* my destiny.

[Exit through door of pawnbroker's house.

*Enter CORNELIUS, clothed in rags, and sings :*

"B E T T E R D A Y S."

AIR: "Slavery Days."

I am thinking of those days, those bright and happy days,  
When I had friends and money at command ;

And a golden watch and chain, which I'll never see again,  
 And those clothes I used to wear so fine and grand.  
 Those happy days are past ; misfortune came at last,  
 And I'm broken down and "nary" cent can raise ;  
 And the friends I used to know they go back upon me now,  
 But it wasn't so when I saw better days.

CHORUS.

I hope they'll come again—let my hopes be not in vain—  
 And people will return to honest ways ;  
 Then subjects like me now wouldn't go about, you know,  
 And I think we all would see much better days.

I have dined on that roast beef—oh, so tender to the teeth,  
 In those happy days when I had lots of cash :  
 But you'd be surprised to know—oh, how quick I'd get just  
 now

On the outside of a ten cent plate of hash.  
 That dream to me is o'er. Roast beef I have no more ;  
 My clothes are rags ; I've lost my stylish ways ;  
 On my uppers now I walk, and so hungry I can't talk,  
 But there was a time when I saw better days.

I hope they'll come again, &c.

(Looks toward pawnbroker's house.)—Here have I come at last, to Simpson's, the pawnbroker. An exile from Coney Isle, they drove me from its sandy shore, and my sands of life are most run out. I have roamed the streets all through, and went through everybody I could, but no one had a cent. There has nothing entered my stomach for the past six months but the fumes of a restaurant that I inhaled while looking in the window. Oh, this is awful ! (Feels of his stomach.) To think that I should have come to this ; I who never knew what it was to be without a dollar in my pocket, that didn't belong to somebody else. Oh, if I could move the heart of this pawnbroker and get him to loan me something on myself ! (Goes to pawnbroker's house and peers in the window, and makes motions as if catching flies from the side of the house, and, throwing them in his mouth suddenly, feels of his stomach. Puts hand to his head, & if sick, and leans against side of house) as .

*Enter SANDY, with ball in his hand.*

I have seen Simpson, and he loaned me a fish ball, and told me to keep this ball to remind me of my obligation. Yes, the sacrifice was awful. I have pawned myself to Simpson, and when the hour of ten minutes expires I am a doomed man ! (Discovers Cornelius.) Ah, who have we here ? (Goes to Cornelius and slaps him on the shoulder.) Why this Moodyness and Sankeyness ?

CORNELIUS (turns and recognizes Sandy)—Hello ! Sandy, old boy, is that you ?

SANDY—Yes, it is all that is left of me ; and the balance will belong to Simpson in a few minutes.

CORNELIUS (surprised)—Whyfore this emotion from an old Castilian and brother convict ? What is the matter ? What are you doing around here ?

SANDY—I've just been getting a *loan* on myself from Simpson. I didn't think it safe to be *alone* any longer.

CORNELIUS (amazed)—A loan on yourself ! Why, you don't mean to say that you have been spouting yourself—given yourself in pledge ! Well, what did you get on this valuable casket (turns Sandy around.) Six months ?

SANDY—No ; I got one fish ball without bread. They don't give bread with one fish ball, and I have devoured the fish ball.

CORNELIUS—And what security did you give ?

SANDY—I am to give myself up to Simpson in ten minutes.

CORNELIUS—What for ?

SANDY—To be used as a door-mat, for people to wipe their muddy shoes on. Yes ; when the bell tolls the hour of ten minutes I am a doomed man. My arms and legs are to be cut off, and my body used as a door-mat.

CORNELIUS (horrified)—Gracious heavens ! you don't say so ! Well, I don't think I will try to get a *loan* on myself. I'll leave Simpson *alone*. He might want me for a mop to wipe up the floor.

SANDY (in despair)—Oh, this is dreadful ! But I wouldn't

care so much about it if I could only see my mother-in-law before I part this life.

CORNELIUS—Your mother-in-law ! What do you want to see her for ?

SANDY—She owes me two dollars and a half, and I want to get it.

CORNELIUS—What are you going to do with it ? You can't take it with you.

SANDY—I thought I would leave it to build a “ hotel for wealthy women, and not charge them anything for board.”

CORNELIUS—Oh, you might better leave the two dollars and a half to me. I'm an old friend of yours and a brother exile and Castilian.

SANDY (starts)—Aye, that's so. A thought strikes me. You just hold this ball, and I will depart at once for my mother-in-law's castle and get the two dollars and a half and return before the hour of my execution and give it to you. (Hands ball to Cornelius.) Watch over this ball, and guard it with your life.

CORNELIUS (takes ball)—I will, my noble duke. So haste away. Not a moment is to be lost, and I will hold the fort till you return. So hurry up and bring me the two dollars and a half.

SANDY—'Tis well, my noble Pythias. I fly ! I fly ! Shoo, fly ! [Exit, stamping off.

*Changes to the character of Shylock, the Jew.*

CORNELIUS (very happy, dances about in glee, and tosses up the ball and catches it.)—I, golly, I'm to be left a fortune of two dollars and a half ! Oh, my ; won't I be a sport—won't I be a thoroughbred !

*A loud noise of a gong is heard in doleful sounds, struck at intervals, ten times.*

CORNELIUS (frightened, moves right wig up and down)—Ah ! what is that I hear ? Oh, what have I done ? I see it all ! Yes, I have put myself in his place ! I have taken the place of Sandy, and that Shylock will come for his pound of

flesh, and I am lost ! I'm a doomed man ! The bell tolls the hour of ten minutes, and I am lost ! Oh, hevving, why didn't I think of this before ! What is to be done ? If I run away they will set the bloodhounds on me and I would be devoured ! (Runs about working his fright wig. Stops suddenly) as

*Enter SANDY, disguised as Shylock.*

(Has a large tin sword in his hand, scrapes it on the floor, as if to sharpen it.)—I want me pound of flesh ! I want me bond ! I want me door-mat ! (Scrapes sword on the floor.)

CORNELIUS (trembling and shaking with fright)—Oh, it wasn't me ! I didn't do it ! It was another fellow ! He's gone to see his mother-in-law ! He's coming right back ! O, spare me, good Shylock, and I'll never do so again. (Falls on his knees.)

SHYLOCK—It is too late ; the hour is passed, and thou art a doomed man, and nothing can save thee. I shall hang thee first, and then cut thy arms and legs off, and use thy body for a door-mat ! What, ho ! guards without, seize the victim. (A man enters, puts a bag over Cornelius' head, and leads him off, followed by Shylock, saying) : I want me pound of flesh ! I want me bond ! I want me door-mat ! (Loud noise and murmuring heard outside) as

*Enter SANDY, in his original dress, with a big carving-knife.*

(Stamping and rushing in for Cornelius)—Oh, Cornelius, Cornelius, where art thou ? Can it be that I am too late to save him ! Oh, could I but save my friend Cornelius ! (Runs about, looking up and down.) Where, oh, where is he ! (A dummy man hanging from a rope swings from the flies to the center of stage. Sandy discovers it. Noise and confusion still goes on outside.) Ah ! what is this I see before me—a dadger ? No ! Yes ; it is my friend Cornelius ! and, by all the dogs, I will save him, come what may. (Jumps up and cuts the dummy down with his knife. A pistol shot is heard. Sandy grabs the dummy and runs off crying—Saved ! Saved ! He is saved !)

**CURTAIN.**

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